REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-77 were pending in this application and were examined.

Applicant has amended claims 1, 3, 4, 17, 18, 20, 21, 27, 29, 30, 45, 46, 48, 49, 52, 54, 57, 58, 59, 71, 72, 74, and 75. Claims 2 and 28 have been canceled without prejudice. Applicant submits that no new matter has been inserted in the application due to the amendments. Claims 1, 3-27, and 29-77 remain pending in this application after entry of this amendment.

EXAMINER INTERVIEW

Applicant would like to thank Examiner Dennis Rosario Vasquez and Primary Examiner Andrew Johns for the interview related to this application conducted on November 28, 2005. Applicant has amended the independent claims as discussed with the Examiners. A Statement of Substance of Interview is being filed along with this amendment.

THE CLAIMS

Rejections under 35 USC 112

Applicant submits that the rejections have been overcome in light of amendments made to claims 3, 29, and 58.

Rejections under 35 USC 102 and 103

Claim 1

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Takahashi (USP-6,504,960).

As agreed to by the Examiners during the telephonic interview, Applicant submits that claim 1, as amended, is patentable over Takahashi (and Cheng et al. (USP 6,012,070)). Claim 1 has been amended as suggested by the Examiners during the telephone interview.

For example, in addition to other features, claim 1, as amended recites:

determining one or more placement regions from the first digital image by applying an image analysis technique to the first digital image, each placement region of the one or

more placement regions identifying a location on the first digital image for placing a digital image from a first set of digital images; (Applicant's claim 1, emphasis added).

Accordingly, as recited in claim 1, one or more placement regions are determined from the first digital image by applying an image analysis or processing technique to the first digital image. In this manner, the one or more placement regions are determined by analyzing the first digital image itself.

As agreed to by the Examiners during the telephonic interview, Takahashi fails to disclose such a concept. Takahashi teaches techniques for unified management of image data and corresponding print format set for a printing device. In Takahashi, a plurality of preconfigured layout templates are provided (an example is depicted in Fig. 2 of Takahashi). Each layout template may have one or more preconfigured positions for printing an image. As part of specifying the print data for an image, a user can select a specific layout template from the preconfigured templates to be associated with an image. The user can also select a specific preconfigured position within the selected layout template for printing the image. The user-specified print data is then associated with the image and used for printing the image. For example, "layout information" reference 33 in Fig. 1 of Takahashi identifies the number of the user-selected layout template, and "print position information" reference 34 in Fig. 1 of Takahashi identifies the user-selected print position within the template.

Accordingly, Takahashi enables a user to select a layout template from a plurality of preconfigured templates. For a selected template, a user can select a print position within the template from a plurality of preconfigured print positions for the template. However, Takahashi fails to disclose anything about applying an image analysis technique to an image to determine one or more placement regions, as recited in claim 1. Even if a layout template, as disclosed in Takahashi, is considered an image, there is no teaching in Takahashi of applying any image analysis technique to the layout template to determine placement regions within the layout template. As indicated above, in Takahashi, the layout templates and associated print positions are preconfigured. As a result there is no reason to apply image analysis techniques to the layout template in Takahashi.

In light of the above, Applicant submits that claim 1 is patentable over Takahashi for at least the reasons stated above.

Claims 2-23 and 27-71

Applicant submits that independent claims 17, 18, 27, 45, 46, 52, 54, 57, 71, and 72 are allowable for at least a similar rationale as discussed above for the allowability of claim 1, and others. Applicant further submits that dependent claims 2-16, 19-23, 28-44, 47-51, 53, 55-56, 58-70, and 73-77 which depend either directly or indirectly from claims 1, 18, 27, 46, 52, 54, 57, and 72 respectively, are also allowable for at least a similar rationale as discussed for allowing the independent claims, and others.

Furthermore, many of the dependent claims recite additional features which, contrary to what is stated in the Office Action, are also not taught or suggested by Takahashi or Cheng et al., considered individually or in combination, thus making the claims patentable for additional reasons.

Claims 24-26

The Examiners indicated during the telephonic interview that claims 24 and 25, as previously pending, are patentable over Takahashi. For example, as agreed to by the Examiners, at least the features of "capturing a template image by scanning a paper medium" (recited in claim 24) and "using the digital camera to capture a template image" (recited in claim 25) are not disclosed by Takahashi. Claim 26 that depends on claim 25 is allowable for at least a similar rationale as discussed for allowing claim 25, and others. Applicant thus submits that claims 24-26 are also patentable.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance and an action to that end is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 650-326-2400.

Respectfully submitted,

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